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State Dept. review completed

III. THE SITUATION IN THE BLOC

A. REACTION TO KHRUSHCHEV DISMANTLING ANNOUNCEMENT

Moscow has moved quickly to dramatize Khrushchev's 28 October offer to dismantle the Soviet bases in Cuba under UN supervision as a major step in guaranteeing world peace. Khrushchev's reference to US assurances against an invasion of Cuba is being highlighted in Soviet domestic propaganda in an apparent effort to convince the Soviet audience that unilateral US action was averted by the Soviet Premier's move.

Khrushchev's indication that the USSR wishes to take up negotiations with the US on broader international issues was reiterated by Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov on his arrival last night in New York. Neither Kuznetsov nor Khrushchev mentioned Berlin, suggesting that for the time being at least Moscow intends to play this issue in low key. The Soviets also avoided any suggestion of a link between Cuba and the Berlin situation in their 26 October overtures to the West Germans to use their influence toward a peaceful settlement of the Cuban crisis.

The Communist bloc's initial treatment of the US-Soviet exchange reflects the impact the Soviet backdown is bound to have on the USSR's position as leader of the bloc. East European press and radio comment attributes the Soviet decision to President Kennedy's assurances not to invade Cuba, but also reiterates Moscow's theme that Khrushchev deserves "personal credit" for preserving the peace.

In a brief dispatch, Radio Warsaw hinted at a possible settlement on other pressing international issues by stating that in this "new atmosphere" it may finally become possible to conduct negotiations on questions of great international significance. Belgrade, which was cautious in its comment earlier in the crisis, is now emphasizing the "statesmanlike" role played by Khrushchev in easing tensions.

The USSR apparently did not coordinate its move with the Castro regime. Aside from Castro's brief reference, Havana has not commented publicly on Khrushchev's message. Similarly, Moscow has only briefly reported Castro's

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statement but has not commented on his demands. While the Soviet Union has declared its willingness to withdraw its missile bases from Cuba, it has indicated it will continue to support Castro and provide economic aid to help him maintain his regime.

Immediately prior to Khrushchev's 27 October letter calling for a reciprocal Soviet-US withdrawal of offensive weapons from Cuba and Turkey, the USSR reportedly attempted to bring pressure to bear on the Turkish government to fore-swear unilaterally the use of missiles. The Soviet ambassador, in emphasizing the horrors of nuclear war, asked the Turkish Foreign Minister on the night of 26 October for assurances that missiles in Turkey would not be used in any war in which Turkey was not involved.

The US Embassy in Moscow reports that there does not seem to be any restrictions on tourist or business travel within the Soviet Union. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] measures which were taken by the USSR to limit the movement of certain foreigners at the beginning of the Cuban crisis have now been lifted.

A terse Radio Peiping newscast reported the latest Soviet move without comment. But the bulk of Chinese reporting on Cuba continues to emphasize US military preparations and repeated pledges of Chinese support for Cuba. Ten thousand Chinese were paraded in the streets of Peiping on 28 October to hear regime spokesmen reiterate these pledges. Thus far, Peiping has been the only bloc capital to broadcast the text of Castro's statement demanding evacuation of Guantanamo.

Khrushchev's Cuban retreat will be used by The Chinese in their efforts to undermine confidence in Soviet leadership of Communist world affairs. Even before the present crisis, the Chinese were implying to the Cubans that the USSR was an untrustworthy ally. [REDACTED]

Peiping undoubtedly will portray Khrushchev's move toward a Cuban solution as weakness in the face of the "imperialist enemy." Albania, Peiping's European ally, already has reported that the Western press is regarding Khrushchev's letter as a "victory for American diplomacy."

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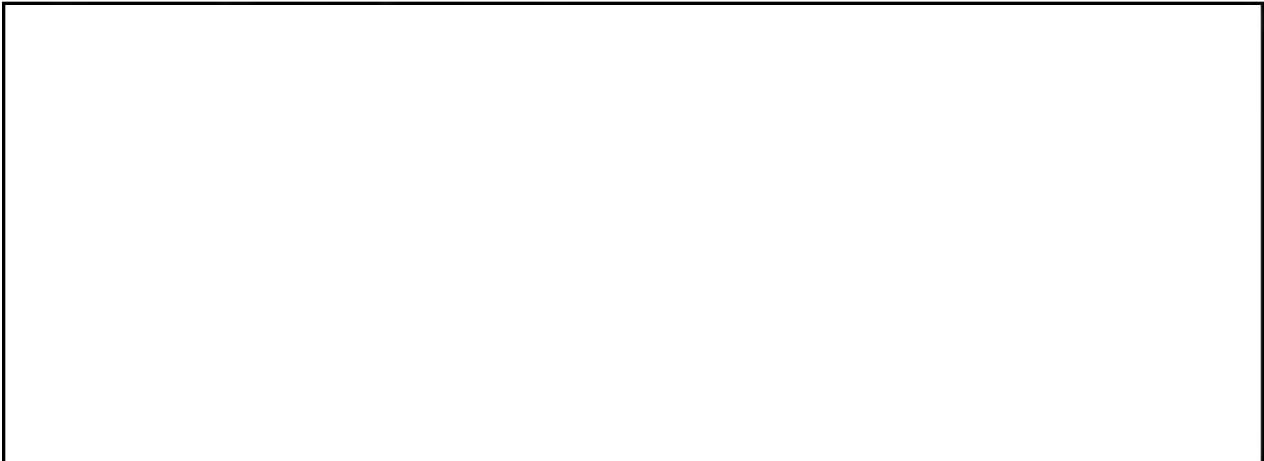
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29 October 1962

IV. NON-BLOC DEVELOPMENTS

U Thant said last evening that he intends to take between six and ten neutral military officers with him to Havana on Tuesday to begin inspection of Soviet missile and bomber sites. The officers will be supervised by Indian Brigadier Rikhye, U Thant's military adviser, who said that on arrival his men will be sent to the locations cited in US information and have them report on dismantling and removal. U Thant told US representatives at the United Nations that it would be helpful to him in his discussions with Cuban officials if the US could suspend reconnaissance flights and the shipping quarantine during his stay. He has also asked for an indication from the President of the "assurances" the US is prepared to offer Cuba.

Word on the official and public reaction in Latin America has not yet begun to come in. However, Venezuela's delegate to the UN, possibly representative of one line of thought, yesterday expressed his concern to our delegation lest the US get trapped into commitments in Cuba beyond the guarantee against "invasion."



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Western European countries greeted the news of Khrushchev's decision to remove the missile bases with surprise, joy, relief, and some notes of caution. A British Foreign Office spokesman said the government was "pleased" by the news and by Khrushchev's agreement to accept UN inspection of the dismantling. The conservative Daily Telegraph commented that now that the USSR had accepted the "verification principle" in Cuba, "a long-barred door may have been set ajar."

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The French showed cautious optimism, seeing the possibility of additional surprises. In Canada, Liberal leader Pearson remarked that if the settlement can lead to progress on disarmament, "then we can be even more grateful to President Kennedy for his firm stand."

Norwegian Prime Minister Gerhardsen said "This is an almost unbelievably happy outcome of a situation that could have had the most disastrous consequences." Swedish Foreign Minister Nilsson described the news as "enormously satisfying," while Bonn's All-German Affairs Minister Lemmer found it "wonderful, astounding." The opposition Frankfurter Rundschau warned, however, that Khrushchev "will certainly try to compensate for the direct retreat in Cuba with a diplomatic offensive at another place." But Berliners did not appear worried, and Mayor Brandt expressed the hope that his city "would feel something of the change which is going through the world."

The Copenhagen radio on 28 October expressed the view that the reason for Khrushchev's "capitulation" was to be found in two events of the previous night: an alleged announcement by Ambassador Stevenson to Allied ambassadors that the US would knock out the missile and bomber bases within 24 hours if work on them was not stopped forthwith; and the mobilization of US transport aircraft, "which could have no other meaning than that the US was preparing to occupy the Soviet Cuban bases."

Turkish Foreign Minister Erkin has been quoted by Agency France Presse as voicing his belief that tensions will "fade away" with the dismantling of the missile bases. Damascus radio broadcast that Premier al-Aza has sent a cable to Khrushchev praising his "brave and noble" stand. A Japanese Government statement calls the latest Kennedy-Khrushchev exchange "a matter for much rejoicing."